

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 8, and 9 were objected to. Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. 2002/0164152 to Kato et al. (herein "Kato") in view of U.S. 6,088,507 to Yamauchi et al. (herein "Yamauchi"). That objection and rejection are traversed as now discussed.

Addressing first the objection to claims 1, 8, and 9, the claims are herein amended to no longer recite the phrase "can be". The claims amendments are thereby believed to address the outstanding objection.

Addressing now the above-noted prior art rejection of claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kato in view of Yamauchi, applicants traverse that rejection.

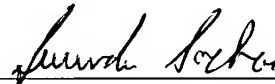
Applicants hereby state on the record that the present application and U.S. 2002/0164152 to Kato at the time the claimed invention was made were obligated to be commonly assigned to the same entity. As the above-noted rejection is under 35 U.S.C. § 103, applicants submit since the present application and Kato were obligated to be commonly assigned at the time of the present invention, Kato is not available as a reference for a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Thereby, applicants submit the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is traversed.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted this application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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